

Senate Resolution 1286

By: Senator Tolleson of the 20th

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing and commending Lt. General Cuthbert A. (Bill) Pattillo; Major General Charles  
2 C. (Buck) Pattillo, Major General Joel B. (Bill) Paris III, General John F. (Big John) Collins;  
3 and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, in 1946, these four generals founded the first State of Georgia Air National Guard  
5 Fighter Aircraft Wing, the 54th Fighter Wing; and

6 WHEREAS, Big John Collins, a National Guard Captain in 1946, was pilot of an A-26 Douglas  
7 Aircraft Company low altitude two engine attack bomber, and Bill and Buck Pattillo, identical  
8 twin brothers, were 1st lieutenants with Bill Paris; and

9 WHEREAS, Bill Pattillo flew close formation on the left wing of the A-26 bomber, Buck flew  
10 close formation on the right wing, and Captain Paris flew tight formation behind and under the  
11 A-26; all three flew Republic Aircraft Corporation P-47 Thunderbolt fighter aircraft  
12 completing a tight diamond formation; and

13 WHEREAS, Brig. General George Finch, the State of Georgia Deputy Adjutant General for the  
14 Georgia Air National Guard, ordered these four pilots to fly air shows around the state to boost  
15 enlistment in the National Guard with great success; and

16 WHEREAS, this success came to the attention of the National Guard Bureau in Washington  
17 and finding this team to be extraordinary, credited these four pilots as the founders of the Air  
18 Force Thunderbirds Precision Flying Team, not unlike the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels; and

19 WHEREAS, Bill Paris was a leading fighter pilot ace in World War II credited with destroying  
20 nine Japanese aircraft in the Southwest Pacific arena; and

21 WHEREAS, Bill Pattillo destroyed a Japanese rocket powered fighter, only one of three Me.  
22 262 fighters destroyed in World War II, plus five other Japanese aircraft; and

1 WHEREAS, Buck Patillo is credited with destroying five Japanese aircraft; and

2 WHEREAS, Big John Collins, as pilot of a B-25D is credited with the downing of six enemy  
3 fighters on one mission plus one Japanese warship as it was exiting Simpson Harbor resulting  
4 in the destruction of Admiral Yamamoto's plans to capture Port Moresby, New Guinea; and

5 WHEREAS, Big John Collins led an attack on Tobera Airfield, destroying numerous Japanese  
6 aircraft and the Bitipaka radio station used to order all Japanese air, sea, and land operations  
7 in the Southwest Pacific area, which forced the Japanese to begin retreating north to their  
8 bases in the Philippine Islands; and

9 WHEREAS, Bill and Buck Patillo, Bill Paris and Big John Collins collectively received four  
10 Silver Stars, nine Distinguished Flying Crosses, nine Legions of Merit, 36 Air Medals, nine  
11 Presidential Unit Citations, four Government of the Philippines medals, two  
12 Croix-de-Guerres with Palm, a U.S. SWPA medal with nine major campaign battle stars, and  
13 121 various noncombat service medals; and

14 WHEREAS, Bill and Buck Pattillo live in Valrico, Florida and are originally from Decatur,  
15 Georgia; Bill Paris lives in Alpharetta, Georgia and was born and raised in Georgia; and Big  
16 John Collins was born in Oklahoma, grew up in Bradenton, Florida and has lived in Georgia  
17 since 1939; and

18 WHEREAS, some 60 years after the conclusion of World War II, all Americans are  
19 encouraged to renew and rededicate themselves to honor the noble sacrifices, valorous deeds,  
20 and enduring accomplishments of the military veterans of what has aptly been called the  
21 Greatest Generation.

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body join  
23 together to express their deepest appreciation to Lt. General Cuthbert A. (Bill) Pattillo, Major  
24 General Charles C. (Buck) Pattillo, Major General Joel B. (Bill) Paris, and Brig. General John  
25 F. (Big John) Collins.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed to  
27 transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Lt. General Cuthbert A. (Bill) Pattillo, Major  
28 General Charles C. (Buck) Pattillo, Major General Joel B. (Bill) Paris, and Brig. General John  
29 F. (Big John) Collins.